

TRAINING PRODUCES BETTER WORKPLACE ENVIRONMENT

ABOUT FIBROCORP. Fibro Corporation manufactures and develops molded-fiber packaging and fiber-molding machinery. Raw material enters the Fibro factory as a paper waste material and leaves as a useable product. Scrap paper is mixed with water to create a paper-based pulp that is molded and dried into fiber packaging, such as egg cartons. The company is based in Wenatchee, Washington. With close to 50 employees, all Fibro Corp products are made in the USA using local labor and materials.

THE CHALLENGE. Fibro Corp was in the second year of its initial plant start-up and wanted to implement Lean Enterprise concepts to help improve its manufacturing processes, increase production capacity, lower costs, and reduce the lead time to profitability. An introduction to Impact Washington (IW), part of the MEP National Network™, through the Port of Chelan, led to Fibro Corp obtaining a JSP Grant and embarking on Lean Manufacturing training with IW consultant Bill Paugh.

MEP CENTER'S ROLE. In addition to on-site training, Paugh provided coaching, implementation consulting, and remote off-site support. He kicked off the program by training key staff in the Principles of Lean Manufacturing and Value Stream Mapping, identifying systems to be targeted for improvement through the Kaizen process. A series of Kaizen events included other trainings, including 5-S workplace organization (Sort, Set in Order, Shine, Standardize, and Sustain), Root Cause Analysis, and Total Productive Maintenance. Finally, Lean Leadership sessions focused on the development of policies and procedures to support long-term sustainable improvements.

Fibro Corp invested in new processes, products and plant equipment and lowered manufacturing costs. The company retained sales and created a better workplace environment, improving employee retention. It also created a documented process for improving strategies, setting the stage for future expansion into a second location.

"The IW services were invaluable to Fibro in improving organizational systems and helping achieve profitability. IW consultant Bill Paugh regularly worked with second and third shifts to make sure the training reached as many team members as possible, took our calls and answered emails with excellent off-site support, and was a pleasure to work with."

-Evieta Inabnit, Human Resources

RESULTS



\$1M in retained sales



Cost savings of \$40,000



Better workplace environment, employee retention



Invested \$320,000 in new processes, products and plant equipment



Created 2 jobs and retained 45 jobs

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